

#14

Song

This song provides a nice example of the way an overall tune is built from phrases whose finals serve as a temporary locus of tonal gravity. As the tune repeats (not only in performance but also in the musician's contemplation) listeners feel the sequence of these pitch sets and tonal goals in a manner reminiscent of the way listeners to jazz and popular music hear chord progressions. In this case, the leader opens with a phrase ending on e4 (m.2); reminiscent of its role in song #10, the group's short response confirms E as the first tonal center. The leader's next phrase cadences on a4 (m.4), but the group immediately moves the tonal gravity up to d5 (also like song #10). Everyone sings the next two phrases (mm.5-7). The first briefly gives tonal weight to a4 before settling on e4. Having created an E-A-D-A-E progression, the tune unveils a surprise--a direct plunge through a new pitch set to the finalis on d4 (a4-g4-e4-d4). Positioned at the song's end, I hear this phrase as the most persuasive organizing factor of the tonality of the whole tune. The tonal feeling of the final phrase does not dominate, however, and as it recurs, the song presents itself as an ever-shifting sequence of pitch sets and modes (see below).

finalis	scale	mode
final on E	e4-f#4-a4-b4-d5	1-2-4-5-7
final on A	a4-b4-d5-e5-f#5	1-2-4-5-6
final on D	d4-e4-g4-a4-c5	1-2-4-5-7 ^b

Drumming

The drumming in #14 is almost identical to #4. The kidi is exactly the same, demonstrating that Ewe composers can set different language to the same musical

material. Unlike songs in which the kidi and song go their separate ways, in #14 the kidi bounces align with important words in the song. The sole difference in the sogo phrase is the ga stroke at the end, which stands for "vO," a word conferring emphasis to the preceding verb like an exclamation mark, "Let's go!" In the recorded performance GFA played this ga stroke for a while but omits it after measure 23. I hear the sogo using the song to guide its timing for rolling passages and energy level, but listening to the kidi and other instruments as partners in the creation of its more fine-grained musical action.